



State of New York Office of Mental Health  
The Nathan S. Kline Institute for Psychiatric Research

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3/30/2010

Dr. David N. Kennedy  
NITRC Community Liaison

Dear Dr. Kennedy:

I am writing to express my strong support for the NITRC initiative. I think this initiative has provided a vital service to the scientific community by placing a large number of tools and datasets under one roof. This has resulted in significant cost savings in a number of ways. First, one does not have to waste valuable time searching the web for relevant tools. These are accessible because of NITRC's comprehensive scope. Second, a number of tools are reviewed online by experts, making it easier to select appropriate ones for the task at hand, and thereby saving time for PIs and technicians. Third, the database contains contact information, making it easier to get technical support. Finally, key researchers have contributed very new tools and datasets. This makes it far easier to keep current in what is a rapidly changing field, which is critical to maintaining a competitive edge in grant applications.

These strengths have contributed significantly to my own NIH-funded studies on DTI and functional connectivity in schizophrenia (supported by R01 MH064783 and R21 MH084031). I have been introduced to a number of new image processing and informatics tools. For instance, the literal explosion of data in these areas presents an informatics challenge. Although I have some experience with informatics tools, I was able, through NITRC, to work closely with some of the investigators working on the Human Imaging Database (HID). They were able to help me install and deploy HID in my own work. It is likely that these consultations would have taken considerably more time had I not had contact information at the ready from the NITRC website.

In addition, I am an investigator on the 1000 Functional Connectomes project. NITRC is an invaluable resource here, because it allows researchers to access both the scripts and the data. This will allow for novel analyses that could not otherwise be conducted, and will thereby save the tremendous amount of money that would be needed to generate a novel dataset of similar scope. Moreover, it has gotten me in touch with other investigators who had questions about the dataset I contributed. Finally, this work is far more visible because of its presence on the NIC website, thereby increasing its impact on the scientific community. Thus, the dissemination of these scripts and data will provide both significant savings in time and money, as well as scientific advancement through novel analyses and collaborations.

As NITRC moves forward, I would like to see more reviews and an increased emphasis on interoperability among tools on the site. In addition, it will be useful for new investigators to have access to tutorials on how to set up and deploy both hardware and software for the

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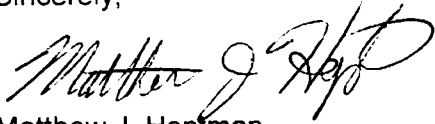
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development of an image processing lab. In particular, it would be useful to provide guidance on cluster/cloud-based computing and on how to integrate imaging and nonimaging data. This latter aspect will represent an important challenge for NIH-funded researchers as we try to examine the determinants and functional significance of their imaging data and will facilitate the ability to ask novel questions of that data.

In summary, I have found NITRC to be an invaluable research and warehousing initiative. I am excited to see where the NITRC team will take this project and look forward to enjoying the fruits of this endeavor for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew J. Hopman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Matthew" being the most prominent part.

Matthew J. Hopman  
Research Scientist